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VI.—CICERO, AD ATT. XV, 9, 1.

When a few months after Caesar's death, Cicero heard that Antony intended to dispose of Brutus and Cassius by sending them upon a mission to buy grain, he expressed himself thus (Ad Att. XV, 9, 1): O rem miseram! primum ullam ab istis, dein, si aliquam, hanc *legatoriam* provinciam! Atque haud scio an melius sit quam ad Eurotam sedere, . . . Ait autem eodem tempore decretum iri ut et iis et reliquis praetoriis provinciae decernantur. Hoc certe melius quam illa Περσικὴ porticus. *Nolo enim Lacedaemonem longinquo† quom Lanuvium existimavit†.* It seems that Cicero would have Brutus doing something worth while rather than wasting his time at his villa near Lanuvium—the stream and portico of which he had presumably called by Spartan names.

No satisfactory emendation for the end of this passage has been found, and though most editors have offered conjectures, none has dared to print his own proposal in the text. The one that has met with most favor perhaps is that of Gronovius: *Nolo enim Lacedaemonem longinquiorem Lanuvio existimaris*, 'when I speak of the Eurotas and the Persian porch I intend you to think of a Sparta no farther away than Lanuvium'. Cicero thus is supposed to be explaining to Atticus in cumbersome Latin his references to Eurotas and Persica, although Atticus was visiting Brutus at Lanuvium during these days even more than Cicero, and apparently knew the place very well (Ad Att. XIV, 21; XV, 4, 2; XV, 9, 2; XV, 20, 2). This obviously is not the solution. The clues to an emendation seem to me to be as follows: 1) Cicero really did not wish Brutus to go away since he wished him to stay near Rome to watch Antony (Ad Att. XV, 11, 1: *neque nunc neque ex praetura—ires*); 2) there is a word-play in the passage, for Cicero adds immediately: *rides, inquires, in talibus rebus?* 3) the word-play probably begins with the expression *legatoriam provinciam*: *legatoriam* is so unusual that most editors question it, while *provinciam* does not again occur in the sub-

sequent references to this office. Cicero speaks of it as *curatio frumenti* in XV, 11, 1 and 2, also as *frumentum* in XV, 11, and as *frumentaria res* in XV, 12.

Now if we recall the passage of Euripides' Telephus—*Σπάρτην ἔλαχες, κείνην κόσμει*—to which Cicero has already alluded twice in his letters (Ad Att. I. 20, 3 and IV. 6, 2), and in which a man's "province", that is, his one supreme duty, is called his "Sparta", we may have the explanation of Cicero's play upon *provincia*—*Lacedaemonem* here. The sense is probably this: "I am not sure that this petty office is not better than sitting in his villa at Lanuvium, but I really do not wish him to go anywhere: I do not wish him to think his 'Sparta'—his real duty—elsewhere than right here." Perhaps Cicero would even imply that it was Brutus' "province" to strike down Antony (a few days later he said: *quemquam praeterea oportuisse tangi*, XV, 11, 2) as he had struck Caesar on the Ides. The Latin would be as near the reading of M as any emendation as yet offered: *Nolo enim Lacedaemonem longinquiorem Lanuvio eum existimare*, that is, he need not go away to find his one supreme task.¹

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¹ It is tempting to seek a play upon several of the words of the original proverb since the transliteration of Greek words presents one of the chief causes of confusion in Cicero's letter. The original therefore may have been: *Nolo enim eum Lacedaemonem λαχεῖν quom κοσμεῖ Lanuvium existimare*—"I do not wish him to think that he has found his 'Sparta' when he is adorning his villa." This with its word-play on *κοσμεῖ* would perhaps justify *rides*.